Section 8. Approach Clearance Procedures

4-8-1. APPROACH CLEARANCE

a. Clear aircraft for "standard" or "special" instrument approach procedures only. To require an aircraft to execute a particular instrument approach procedure, specify in the approach clearance the name of the approach as published on the approach chart. Where more than one procedure is published on a single chart and a specific procedure is to be flown, amend the approach clearance to specify execution of the specific approach to be flown. If only one instrument approach of a particular type is published, the approach needs not be identified by the runway reference. An aircraft conducting an ILS/MLS approach when the glideslope/glidepath is reported out of service shall be advised at the time an approach clearance is issued. Standard Instrument Approach Procedures shall commence at an Initial Approach Fix or an Intermediate Approach Fix if there is not an Initial Approach Fix. Where adequate radar coverage exists, radar facilities may vector aircraft to the final approach course in accordance with para 5-9-1, Vectors to Final Approach Course.

PHRASEOLOGY-
CLEARED (type) APPROACH.

(For a straight-in-approach- IFR),

CLEARED STRAIGHT-IN (type) APPROACH.

(To authorize a pilot to execute his/her choice of instrument approach),

CLEARED APPROACH.

(Where more than one procedure is published on a single chart and a specific procedure is to be flown),

CLEARED (specific procedure to be flown) APPROACH.

(To authorize a pilot to execute an ILS/MLS approach when the glideslope/glidepath is out of service),

CLEARED (type) APPROACH, GLIDESLOPE/GLIDEPATH UNUSABLE.

EXAMPLE-
"Cleared Approach."
"Cleared V-O-R Approach."
"Cleared V-O-R Runway Three Six Approach."
"Cleared F-M-S Approach."
"Cleared F-M-S Runway Three Six Approach."
"Cleared I-L-S Approach."
"Cleared Localizer Back Course Runway One Three Approach."
"Cleared R-NAV Runway Two Two Approach."
"Cleared GPS Runway Two Approach."
"Cleared BRANCH ONE R-NAV Arrival and R-NAV Runway One Three Approach."
"Cleared I-L-S Runway Three Six Approach, glideslope unusable."
"Cleared M-L-S Approach."
"Cleared M-L-S Runway Three Six Approach."
"Cleared M-L-S Runway Three Six Approach, glidepath unusable."

NOTE-
1. *Clearances authorizing instrument approaches are issued on the basis that, if visual contact with the ground is made before the approach is completed, the entire approach procedure will be followed unless the pilot receives approval for a contact approach, is cleared for a visual approach, or cancels their IFR flight plan.*

2. *Approach clearances are issued based on known traffic. The receipt of an approach clearance does not relieve the pilot of his/her responsibility to comply with applicable Parts of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the notations on instrument approach charts which levy on the pilot the responsibility to comply with or act on an instruction; e.g., "Straight-in minima not authorized at night," "Procedure not authorized when glideslope/glidepath not used," "Use of procedure limited to aircraft authorized to use airport," or "Procedure not authorized at night."*

3. *The name of the approach, as published, is used to identify the approach, even though a component of the approach aid, other than the localizer on an ILS or the azimuth on an MLS is inoperative. Where more than one procedure to the same runway is published on a single chart, each must adhere to all final approach guidance contained on that chart, even though each procedure will be treated as a separate entity when authorized by ATC. For example, Instrument Approach Procedures published on a chart as either HI-VOR/DME or TACAN 1 would be stated as either "HI V-O-R/D-M-E 1 Runway Six Left Approach" or "HI TACAN 1 Runway Six Left Approach." The use of numerical identifiers in the approach name, such as "HI TACAN 1 Rwy 6L or HI TACAN 2 Rwy 6L," denotes multiple straight-in approaches to the same runway that use the same approach aid. Alphabetical suffixes denote a procedure that does not meet the criteria for straight-in landing minimums authorization."*

4. *14 CFR Section 91.175(j) requires a pilot to receive a clearance for a procedure turn when vectored to a final*

approach fix or position, conducting a timed approach, or when the procedure specifies "NO PT."

5. *An aircraft which has been cleared to a holding fix and prior to reaching that fix is issued a clearance for an approach, but not issued a revised routing; i.e., "proceed direct to. . . ." may be expected to proceed via the last assigned route, a feeder route (if one is published on the approach chart), and then to commence the approach as published. If, by following the route of flight to the holding fix, the aircraft would overfly an IAF or the fix associated with the beginning of a feeder route to be used, the aircraft is expected to commence the approach using the published feeder route to the IAF or from the IAF as appropriate; i.e., the aircraft would not be expected to overfly and return to the IAF or feeder route.*

REFERENCE-
FAAO 8260.3, United States Standard for Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS).

b. For aircraft operating on unpublished routes, issue the approach clearance only after the aircraft is: (See FIG 4-8-1.)

Approach Clearance Example

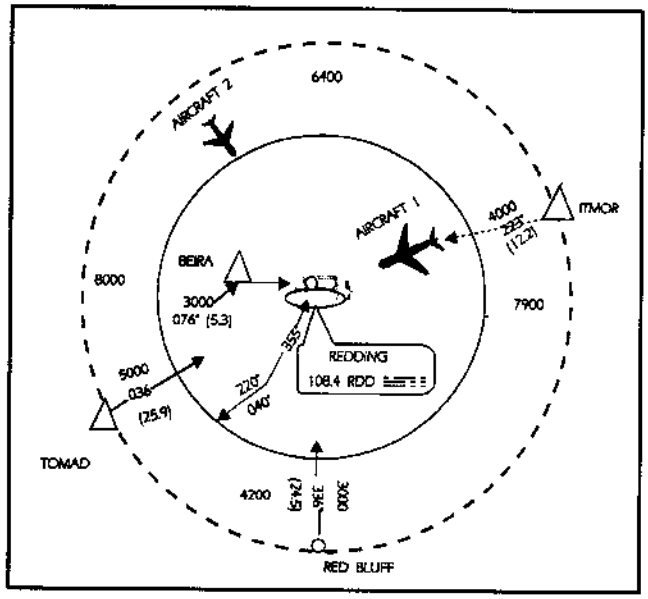

FIG 4-8-1

1. Established on a segment of a published route or instrument approach procedure.

EXAMPLE-
Aircraft 1: The aircraft is established on a segment of a published route at 5,000 feet. "Cleared V-O-R Runway Three Four Approach."

2. Assigned an altitude to maintain until the aircraft is established on a segment of a published route or instrument approach procedure.

EXAMPLE-
Aircraft 2: The aircraft is inbound to the VOR on an unpublished direct route at 7,000 feet. The minimum IFR altitude for IFR operations (14 CFR Section 91.177) along this flight path to the VOR is 5,000 feet. "Cross the Redding V-O-R at or above five thousand, cleared V-O-R Runway Three Four Approach."

NOTE-
1. *The altitude assigned must assure IFR obstruction clearance from the point at which the approach clearance is issued until established on a segment of a published route or instrument approach procedure.*

2. *If the altitude assignment is VFR-on-top, it is conceivable that the pilot may elect to remain high until arrival over the final approach fix which may require the pilot to circle to descend so as to cross the final approach fix at an altitude that would permit landing.*

c. Except when applying radar procedures, timed or visual approaches, clear an aircraft for an approach to an airport when the preceding aircraft has landed or canceled IFR flight plan.

d. Where instrument approaches require radar monitoring and radar services are not available, do not use the phraseology "cleared approach," which allows the pilot his/her choice of instrument approaches.

e. Where a Terminal Arrival Area (TAA) has been established to support RNAV approaches use the procedures under subpara b above. (See FIG 4-8-2.)

EXAMPLE-
Aircraft 1: The aircraft has crossed the TAA boundary and is established on a segment of the approach. "Cleared R-NAV Runway One Eight Approach."

Aircraft 2: The aircraft is inbound to the CHARR (right corner) IAF on an unpublished direct route at 7,000 feet. The minimum IFR altitude for IFR operations (14 CFR Section 91.177) along this flight path to the IAF is 5,000 feet. "Cleared to CHARR, Maintain at or above five thousand until entering the TAA, Cleared R-NAV Runway One Eight Approach."

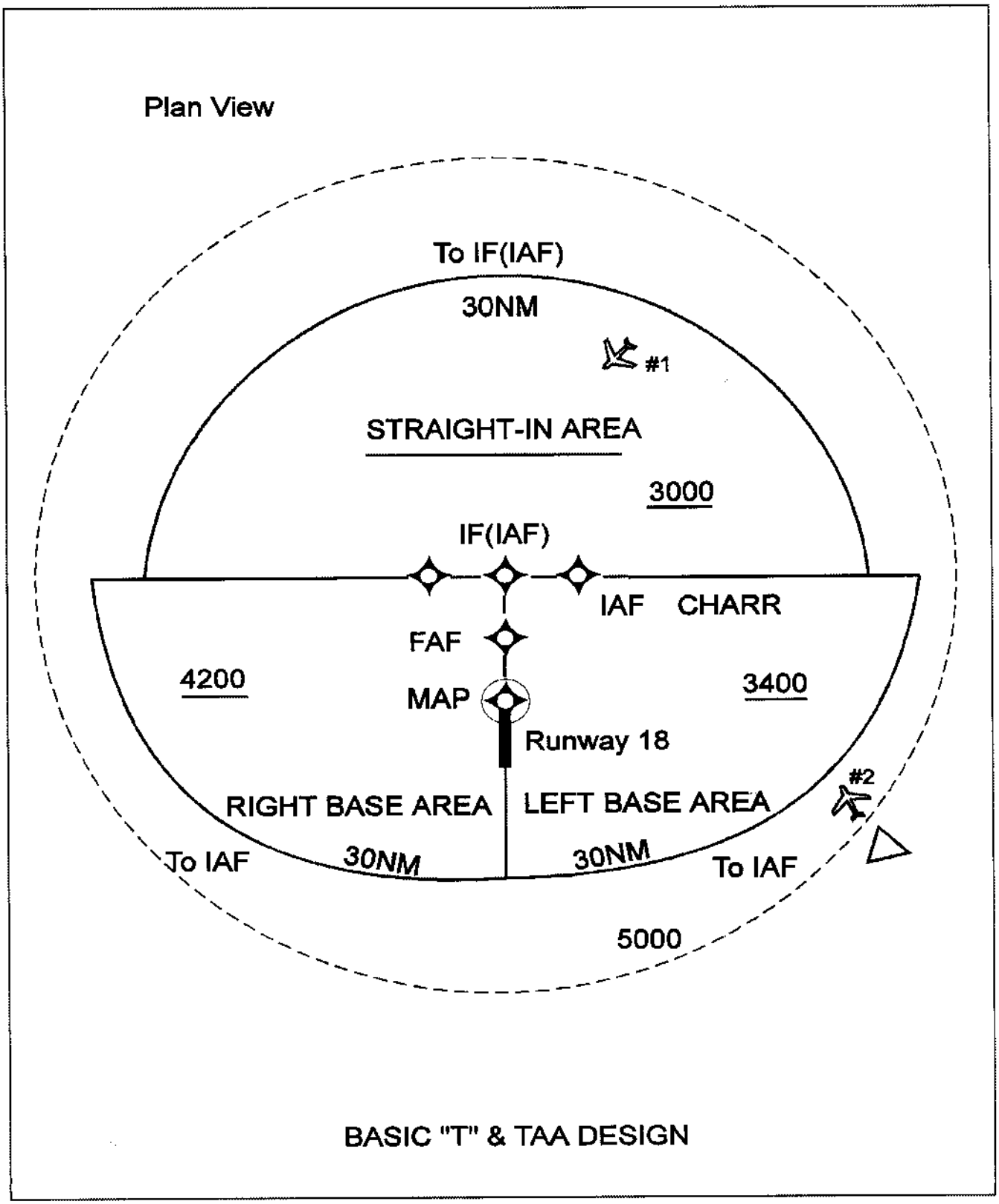
Plan View
To IF(IAF)
30NM
#1
STRAIGHT-IN AREA
3000
IF(IAF)
IAF
CHARR
FAF
4200
MAP
3400
Runway 18
#2
RIGHT BASE AREA
LEFT BASE AREA
To IAF
30NM
30NM
To IAF
5000
BASIC "T" & TAA DESIGN

FIG 4-8-2

4-8-2. CLEARANCE LIMIT

Issue approach or other clearances, as required, specifying the destination airport as the clearance limit if airport traffic control service is not provided even though this is a repetition of the initial clearance.

4-8-3. RELAYED APPROACH CLEARANCE

TERMINAL

Include the weather report, when it is required and available, when an approach clearance is relayed through a communication station other than an air carrier company radio. You may do this by telling the station to issue current weather.

4-8-4. ALTITUDE ASSIGNMENT FOR MILITARY HIGH ALTITUDE INSTRUMENT APPROACHES

Altitudes above those shown on the high altitude instrument approach procedures chart may be specified when required for separation.

NOTE-
To preclude the possibility of aircraft exceeding rate-of-descent or airspeed limitations, the maximum altitudes which may be assigned for any portion of the high altitude instrument approach procedure will be determined through coordination between the ATC facility concerned and the military authority which originated the high altitude instrument approach procedure.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Military Turbojet En Route Descent, Para 4-7-5.

4-8-5. SPECIFYING ALTITUDE

Specify in the approach clearance the altitude shown in the approach procedures when adherence to that altitude is required for separation. When vertical separation will be provided from other aircraft by pilot adherence to the prescribed maximum, minimum, or mandatory altitudes, the controller may omit specifying the altitude in the approach clearance.

NOTE-
Use NOS or NIMA instrument approach procedures charts appropriate for the aircraft executing the approach.

4-8-6. CIRCLING APPROACH

a. Circling approach instructions may only be given for aircraft landing at airports with operational control towers.

b. Include in the approach clearance instructions to circle to the runway in use if landing will be made on a runway other than that aligned with the direction of instrument approach. When the direction of the circling maneuver in relation to the airport/runway is required, state the direction (eight cardinal compass points) and specify a left or right base/downwind leg as appropriate.

PHRASEOLOGY-
CIRCLE TO RUNWAY (number),

or

CIRCLE (direction using eight cardinal compass points) OF THE AIRPORT/RUNWAY FOR A LEFT/RIGHT BASE/ DOWNWIND TO RUNWAY (number).

NOTE-
Where standard instrument approach procedures (SIAP) authorize circling approaches, they provide a basic minimum of 300 feet of obstacle clearance at the MDA within the circling area considered. The dimensions of these areas, expressed in distances from the runways, vary for the different approach categories of aircraft. In some cases a SIAP may otherwise restrict circling approach maneuvers.

c. Do not issue clearances, such as "extend downwind leg," which might cause an aircraft to exceed the circling approach area distance from the runways within which required circling approach obstacle clearance is assured.

4-8-7. SIDE-STEP MANEUVER

TERMINAL

Side-Step Maneuver. When authorized by an instrument approach procedure, you may clear an aircraft for an approach to one runway and inform the aircraft that landing will be made on a parallel runway.

EXAMPLE-
"Cleared I-L-S Runway seven left approach. Side-step to runway seven right."

NOTE-
Side-step maneuvers require higher weather minima/MDA. These higher minima/MDA are published on the instrument approach charts.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Closed/Unsafe Runway Information, Para 3-3-2.
P/CG Term- Sidestep Maneuver.

4-8-8. COMMUNICATIONS RELEASE

If an IFR aircraft intends to land at an airport not served by a tower or FSS, approve a change to the advisory service frequency when you no longer require direct communications.

PHRASEOLOGY-
CHANGE TO ADVISORY FREQUENCY APPROVED.

NOTE-
An expeditious frequency change permits the aircraft to receive timely local airport traffic information in accordance with AC 90-42, Traffic Advisory Practices at Airports Without Operating Control Towers.

4-8-9. MISSED APPROACH

Except in the case of a VFR aircraft practicing an instrument approach, an approach clearance automatically authorizes the aircraft to execute the missed approach procedure depicted for the instrument approach being flown. An alternate missed approach procedure as published on the appropriate FAA Form 8260 may be assigned when necessary. Once an aircraft commences a missed approach, it may be radar vectored.

NOTE-
1. *Alternate missed approach procedures are published on the appropriate FAA Form 8260 only and require a detailed clearance when they are issued to the pilot.*

2. *In the event of a missed approach involving a turn, unless otherwise cleared, the pilot will proceed to the missed approach point before starting that turn.*

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Practice Approaches, Para 4-8-11.
FAAO 7110.65, Vectors Below Minimum Altitude, Para 5-6-3.
FAAO 7110.65, Successive or Simultaneous Departures, Para 5-8-3.
FAAO 8260.19, Flight Procedures and Airspace, Paras 404 and 815.
FAAO 8260.3, United States Standard for Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS), Paras 275, 278, 943, 957, and 997.

4-8-10. APPROACH INFORMATION

Specify the following in the approach clearance when the pilot says he/she is unfamiliar with the procedure:

a. Initial approach altitude.

b. Direction and distance from the holding fix within which procedure turn is to be completed.

c. Altitude at which the procedure turn is to be made.

d. Final approach course and altitude.

e. Missed approach procedures if considered necessary.

PHRASEOLOGY-
INITIAL APPROACH AT (altitude), PROCEDURE TURN AT (altitude), (number) MINUTES/MILES (direction), FINAL APPROACH ON (name of NAVAID) (specified) COURSE/RADIAL/AZIMUTH AT (altitude).

4-8-11. PRACTICE APPROACHES

Except for military aircraft operating at military airfields, ensure that neither VFR nor IFR practice approaches disrupt the flow of other arriving and departing IFR or VFR aircraft. Authorize, withdraw authorization, or refuse to authorize practice approaches as traffic conditions require. Normally, approaches in progress should not be terminated.

NOTE-
The priority afforded other aircraft over practice instrument approaches is not intended to be so rigidly applied that it causes grossly inefficient application of services.

a. Separation.

1. IFR aircraft practicing instrument approaches shall be afforded standard separation in accordance with Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 minima until:

(a) The aircraft lands, and the flight is terminated, or

(b) The pilot cancels the flight plan.

2. Where procedures require application of IFR separation to VFR aircraft practicing instrument approaches, standard IFR separation in accordance with Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 shall be provided. Controller responsibility for separation begins at the point where the approach clearance becomes effective. Except for heavy aircraft/B757, 500 feet vertical separation may be applied between VFR aircraft and between a VFR and an IFR aircraft.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7210.3, Practice Instrument Approaches, Para 6-4-4.
FAAO 7210.3, Practice Instrument Approaches, Para 10-4-5.

3. Where separation services are not provided to VFR aircraft practicing instrument approaches, the controller shall;

(a) Instruct the pilot to maintain VFR.

(b) Advise the pilot that separation services are not provided.

PHRASEOLOGY-
"(Aircraft identification) MAINTAIN VFR, PRACTICE APPROACH APPROVED, NO SEPARATION SERVICES PROVIDED."

(c) Provide traffic information or advise the pilot to contact the appropriate facility.

4. If an altitude is assigned, including at or above/below altitudes, the altitude specified must meet MVA, minimum safe altitude, or minimum IFR altitude criteria.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Altitude Assignments, Para 7-7-5.

5. All VFR aircraft shall be instructed to maintain VFR on initial contact or as soon as possible thereafter.

NOTE-
This advisory is intended to remind the pilot that even though ATC is providing IFR-type instructions, the pilot is responsible for compliance with the applicable parts of the CFR governing VFR flight.

b. Missed Approaches.

1. Unless alternate instructions have been issued, IFR aircraft are automatically authorized to execute the missed approach depicted for the instrument approach being flown.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Missed Approach, Para 4-8-9.

2. VFR aircraft are not automatically authorized to execute the missed approach procedure. This authorization must be specifically requested by the pilot and approved by the controller. When a missed approach has been approved, separation shall be provided throughout the missed approach.

REFERENCE-
FAAO 7110.65, Visual Separation, Para 7-2-1.

4-8-12. LOW APPROACH AND TOUCH-AND-GO

Consider an aircraft cleared for a touch-and-go, low approach, or practice approach as an arriving aircraft until that aircraft touches down or crosses the landing threshold; thereafter, consider the aircraft as a departing aircraft. Before the aircraft begins its final descent, issue the appropriate departure instructions the pilot is to follow upon completion of the approach (in accordance with para 4-3-2, Departure Clearances). Climb-out instructions must include a specific heading or a route of flight and altitude, except when the aircraft will maintain VFR and contact the tower.

EXAMPLE-
"After completing low approach, climb and maintain six thousand. Turn right, heading three six zero."

"Maintain VFR, contact tower."

(Issue other instructions as appropriate.)

NOTE-
Climb-out instructions may be omitted after the first approach if instructions remain the same.